

Jesse Silbert

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Education

Princeton University *2019-present*

PhD Candidate in Economics

Expected Completion Date: June 2026

Columbia University *2013-2017*

B.A. in Economics-Mathematics

References

Alessandro Lizzeri

Stanley G. Ivins '34 Professor of Economics
Department of Economics
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Adam Kapor

Associate Professor of Economics and Public Affairs
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Associate Professor of Economics and Public Affairs
Department of Economics, Industrial Relations Section
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Princeton University
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Fields

PRIMARY Industrial Organization

SECONDARY Labor Economics

Job Market Paper

“Making Talk Cheap: Generative AI and Labor Market Signaling.” (with Anaïs Galdin.) 2025.

*Large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT have significantly lowered the cost of producing written content. This paper studies how LLMs, through lowering writing costs, disrupt markets that traditionally relied on writing as a costly signal of quality (e.g., job applications, college essays). Using data from **Freelancer.com**, a major digital labor platform, we explore the effects of LLMs’ disruption of labor market signaling on equilibrium market outcomes. We develop a novel LLM-based measure to quantify the extent to which an application is tailored to a given job posting. Taking the measure to the data, we find that employers have a high willingness to pay for workers with more customized applications in the period before LLMs are introduced,*

but not after. To isolate and quantify the effect of LLMs' disruption of signaling on equilibrium outcomes, we develop and estimate a structural model of labor market signaling, in which workers invest costly effort to produce noisy signals that predict their ability in equilibrium. We use the estimated model to simulate a counterfactual equilibrium in which LLMs render written applications useless in signaling workers' ability. Without costly signaling, employers are less able to identify high-ability workers, causing the market to become significantly less meritocratic: compared to the pre-LLM equilibrium, workers in the top quintile of the ability distribution are hired 19% less often, workers in the bottom quintile are hired 14% more often.

Working Papers

- “Job Matching without Price Discrimination.” (with Wilbur Townsend.) 2025

Revise and Resubmit at Games and Economic Behavior

Work in Progress

- “Congestion and Effortful Information Provision in Two-Sided Markets.”
(with Anaïs Galdin.)
- “Attentional Market Power on Digital Labor Platforms.”
(with Anaïs Galdin and Yiyi Tan.)

Research Assistance

2018-2019 Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow, Opportunity Insights at Harvard University

2017-2018 Pre-Doctoral Research Fellow, Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research

Teaching

Princeton ECO 325: Organization and Design of Markets (TA, Fall 2023)

ECO 310: Microeconomic Theory: A Mathematical Approach (TA, Fall 2022)

Grants, Fellowships and Awards

Princeton University Graduate Fellowship 2019-2025

National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship 2021-2024

Department of Economics Graduate Student Teaching Prize, Princeton University Fall 2023

William S. Dietrich II Economic Theory Center
Summer Research Grant, Princeton University Summer 2023

Magna Cum Laude with Departmental Honors in Economics, Columbia University Spring 2017

Professional Activities

Referee Service

Journal of Economic Theory

Last updated: October 2025